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Mr. Paul J. Hoffman
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Eugene, Oregon

Dear Paul:

I have just returned from an extended trip to Washington, to find the reprints which you sent me so promptly. They look extremely interesting, and I shall send you some comments when I have had the opportunity to study them. I presume you have seen the very stimulating article on diagnosis and decision theory appearing in the latest issue of Behavioral Science.

Ward Edwards is spending the summer here at SDC, and I have been attending a weekly seminar of RAND and SDC types on Bayesian decision theory at Edwards' home. I think the time has arrived for an exposition to be put before the public outlining the implications of Bayesian notions on inference in the varied fields in which the interpretation of evidence plays a major part: legal inference, medical diagnosis, intelligence, systems analysis, command decision-making, etc. I have interested a lawyer friend of mine in pursuing the legal aspects; perhaps your own group will contribute to the medical side. For the first time, it seems to me, the Bayesian approach offers a plausible framework for a logic of inferential reasoning that underlies all of these disciplines.

It so happens that I have been working lately on NATO problems at RAND, but the project that lies ahead of me is the one I described at the conference: problems of communication in crises, with the emphasis not upon technological matters but upon the purposeful influencing of opinions, including those of subordinate staffs, of allies, and of enemy decision-makers. I am interested not merely in verbal communication but by means of posture, acts, and processes. Problems of evidence and inference on both sides are clearly central, and I wish to focus as much

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-2-

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upon the difficulties of the process, the ambiguities, opportunities for misunderstanding and the effects of preconceptions, as upon the possibilities for successful communication.

I hope you will continue to keep me supplied with available drafts bearing upon your ongoing work.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel Ellsberg
Economics Department

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